



17 September 2014

To: HELCOM SEAL Contacts

Cc: HELCOM Heads of Delegations
HELCOM HABITAT Contacts
HELCOM HABITAT Observers
HELCOM CORESET II Task Managers for marine mammals and birds

**Re. Eighth Meeting of HELCOM Seal Expert Group (HELCOM SEAL 8-2014)
Turku, Finland, 21–23 October 2014**

Dear Colleagues,

With regard to the decision of HELCOM SEAL 7-2013 (paragraph 8.3), I have the pleasure to forward you the invitation by the Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute to the eighth Meeting of the HELCOM *ad hoc* Seal Expert Group (HELCOM SEAL 8-2014) to be held on 21–23 October 2014 in Turku, Finland, at the premises of Ruissalo Spa Hotel (Ruissalon puistotie 640, 20100 Turku).

The Meeting will start on **Tuesday, 21 October at 10.00** and will terminate on **Thursday, 23 October by 16.00**.

A Provisional Annotated Agenda is enclosed to this letter. Documents for the Meeting will be made available in the new [HELCOM Meeting Portal](#). Please find [here instructions](#) for signing up as a *first time user* of the new Meeting Portal. The participants are kindly invited to sign up to the new Meeting Portal at their earliest convenience. Once you have signed up to the Meeting Portal, the Secretariat will need to grant you separate permission to access the restricted meeting document library on the [SEAL 8-2014 Meeting Site](#). After signing up, the participants are kindly requested to sign in and register to the Meeting by answering the [Participation Survey](#) not later than **14 October 2014**.

As the HELCOM Secretariat is in a transition phase with taking into use the new Meeting Portal, we appreciate your patience with possible bugs and challenges in the system and welcome any feedback and comments you might have. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the HELCOM Data Administrator (joni.kaitaranta@helcom.fi).

The Participants are requested to note that according to Rule 6 of the Rules of Procedure of the Helsinki Commission **basic documents and documents requiring action or a decision** by the Meeting should be submitted in electronic form to the Secretariat (petra.kaaria@helcom.fi) by **29 September 2014**. Bulky documents should include abstracts embodying the essence of the proposals and action requested from the Meeting. **Documents containing comments to the basic documents as well as information documents** should be provided to the Secretariat by **14 October 2014**.

Yours sincerely,


Ulla Li Zweifel
Professional Secretary